

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 6
Columbia River Compact
March 26, 2002**

Purpose:	To review ongoing commercial fisheries and consider commercial fishing options in the mainstem Columbia River.
TAC:	This Fact Sheet was not reviewed by the TAC.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Endangered Species Act (ESA)

- Fisheries being considered at this Compact are addressed in a Section 7/10 Application outlining proposed non-Indian fisheries that the states of Washington and Oregon submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on November 3, 2000.
- The ESA limits aggregate fishery impacts to $\leq 2\%$ for listed wild steelhead and $\leq 6\%$ for listed hatchery steelhead.

Interim Management Agreement

- An Interim Management Agreement covering fisheries for upriver spring chinook, summer chinook, and sockeye is in effect for 2001-2003.
- The Interim Management Agreement includes a sliding scale spring chinook harvest matrix for 2001-2005 and allocates upriver impacts between non-Indian and treaty Indian fisheries for 2001-2003.
- Based on preseason run size forecasts the Interim Management Agreement limits impacts to listed upriver spring chinook to $\leq 2\%$ for non-Indian fisheries and $\leq 12\%$ for treaty Indian fisheries in 2002.

Non-Indian Upriver Impact Allocation

- Non-Indian fisheries will be managed in accordance with the guiding principles, fishery management objectives, and impact sharing matrix adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions and the Columbia River Compact.

Excerpts From Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Allocation For Non-Indian Fisheries 2002-2003

Fisheries Management Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage the mainstem Columbia River commercial fishery to attain the commercial allocation of Willamette spring chinook.• Manage non-Indian upriver spring chinook impacts to provide for equitable sport and commercial hatchery spring chinook harvest opportunity in the mainstem Columbia River downstream of McNary Dam.• Maximize the economic benefits of spring chinook harvested by the commercial fishery by focusing the majority of the commercial fishing effort early in the spring chinook season in years where there is sufficient Willamette spring chinook abundance. Commercial fishing later in the season would be dependent on remaining commercial upriver spring chinook impact allocation and would be structured to minimize effects on the sport fishery.• Maximize sport fishing opportunity during late March through April, <i>and extending into May if possible</i>,¹ to provide angler opportunity during the period of peak spring chinook abundance. <i>Recognize associated economic benefits after mid-March</i>². The number of recreational fishing days in April will depend on the annual abundance of upriver spring chinook, fishing conditions, and the level of effort.

¹. Additional language endorsed by WFWC.

². Additional language endorsed by OFWC.

- Based on preseason run size forecasts the impacts sharing matrix allocates the non-Indian upriver impact limit 60% for mainstem sport fisheries (1.02% impact rate) and 40% for mainstem commercial fisheries (0.68% impact rate).

Willamette Spring Chinook Management

- The Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plan (FMEP) for Willamette spring chinook limits impacts for all freshwater fisheries in 2002 to $\leq 15\%$ on wild Willamette River spring chinook.
- For 2002 the Willamette River Basin Fish Management Plan (WFMP) allocates surplus hatchery Willamette River spring chinook 73% for sport fisheries and 27% for commercial fisheries.
- Based on the preseason run size forecast the WFMP allocates 9,700 surplus hatchery Willamette spring chinook to mainstem commercial fisheries in 2002.

WATER CONDITIONS

- The Columbia River has been very warm with water temperatures measured at Bonneville Dam ranging between 45°F and 46°F during the month of March.
- Flows are below average with flow measured at Bonneville Dam ranging between 118 kcfs and 145 kcfs since March 17.
- The Columbia River remains clear with visibility of 5 feet at Bonneville Dam since March 18
- Flow at Salem peaked at 56,000 cfs on March 13 and subsequently declined to 37,000 on March 18.
- Visibility at Willamette Falls did not exceed 1 foot during March 12-19 but quickly increased to 2 feet on March 21.
- Since March 19 flow at Salem has ranged between 25,000 cfs and 30,000 cfs and visibility at Willamette Falls has ranged between 1.8 feet and 2.8 feet.

FISHERY UPDATES

Non-Indian Winter Sturgeon Season

- The winter sturgeon season consisting of 11 30-hour fishing periods was completed on February 15.
- Catches were as expected with 2,709 white sturgeon and 151 marked spring chinook landed during this fishery.

Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Tangle Net Demonstration Fishery

- At the January 31, 2002 Compact hearing six 14-hour daylight fishing periods were adopted for all of Zones 1-5.
- At the March 7, 2002 Compact hearing five 24-hour fishing periods were adopted for all of Zones 1-5.
- A 48-hour fishing period was adopted for all Zones 1-5 at the March 19, 2002 Compact hearing and an 18-hour fishing period was adopted at the March 22, 2002 Compact hearing.
- During the first eight fishing periods (February 25-March 13) marked chinook catches ranged between 140 and 436 and averaged 266.

- Catches during the ninth and tenth fishing periods (March 14-18) increased with marked chinook landings of 1,251 and 1,462, respectively.
- Landings during the 72-hour fishing period of March 19-22 totalled 4,083 marked spring chinook and the most recent 18-hour fishing period on March 24-25 resulted in a catch of 2,205 marked spring chinook.
- To date an estimated 60 white sturgeon have been landed in this fishery.
- Staff has monitored a total of 246 boats and 630 drifts in this fishery to date.
- Based on monitoring results through March 20 the immediate mortality rate for unmarked chinook is 1% and 90% of the chinook were released in condition 1 (vigorous, not bleeding).
- Through March 20 the mark rate for chinook has ranged between 42% -72% and averaged 51%.

<i>Chinook Catches and Impact Rates</i>								
Fishing Period	Chinook Kept				Chinook Released			
	Total	Upriver Stock	Willamette River Stock	Other Lower River Stock	Total	Upriver Stock	Other Lower River Stocks	Upriver Impacts
Jan 7-Feb 15	154	19	115	20	54	25	29	0.007%
Feb 25-Mar 1	538	180	306	52	414	320	94	0.015%
March 4-8	762	303	384	75	556	426	131	0.022%
March 10-15	2,076	1,030	875	171	2,101	1,741	360	0.083%
March 17-22	5,545	3,009	2,121	415	5,627	4,805	821	0.234%
March 24-25	2,205	1,333	736	136	2,549	2,279	270	0.108%
Totals to Date	11,280	5,874	4,537	869	11,301	9,596	1,705	0.469%

- Through the first four fishing periods (February 25-March 4) the steelhead:chinook ratio ranged between 2.2:1 and 3.0:1.
- During the March 6 through March 18 fishing periods steelhead:chinook ratios ranged between 0.4:1 and 1.3:1.
- During the March 19-22 steelhead:chinook ratios ranged between 0.4:1 and 1.0:1.
- Through March 20 the steelhead mark rate has ranged between 20% and 56% and has averaged 40%.
- The projected steelhead handle through March 25 is 18,800 steelhead of which 11,300 are unmarked and 7,500 are marked.
- Staff believes some steelhead are being handled more than once.
- Based on monitoring results to date the immediate mortality rate for steelhead is 1.7% which would produce an immediate mortality estimate of 192 unmarked steelhead.
- To date 84% of the steelhead handled during this demonstration fishery have been released in condition 1 (vigorous, not bleeding).

Non-Indian Spring Chinook Sport Fishery

- Effort is building in the lower Columbia mainstem sport fishing.
- Poor water conditions in the Willamette and Cowlitz have hampered the fishery below St. Helens and effort in that section of the river during 2002 is down from 2001.
- Effort during 2002 in the area from Vancouver to Bonneville Dam is high in comparison to the same time frame in 2001.

<i>Effort Estimates and Catch Rates in Lower Columbia River Sport Fishery</i>		
	2001	2002
Boat Count	237 (Thur 3/22) 26% above St. Helens	245 (Wed 3/20) 70% above St. Helens
Boat Anglers:		
Chinook kept	.16 per boat	.08 per boat
Chinook released	.06 per boat	.06 per boat
Bank Anglers:		
Chinook kept	.03 per rod	.04 per rod
Chinook released	.02 per rod	.03 per rod

- Effort continues to build with aerial counts of 277 on Friday March 22 and 734 on Saturday March 23.
- Weekend catch rates were 0.07 chinook kept and 0.07 chinook released per boat and 0.01 chinook kept and 0.01 chinook released per bank rod.
- Angler trips in the lower Willamette river have totaled 9,800 through March 17 and have produced catches of 250 marked chinook kept and 118 unmarked chinook released.
- During the last three weeks effort in 2002 (9,800 angler trips) has been less than 2001 (14,300 angler trips) primarily due to poor water conditions. Catch rate has been similar with 0.037 chinook caught per rod in 2002 as compared to 0.038 chinook caught per rod in 2001.
- The mark rate to date has been 68% as compared to the preseason expectation of 80%.
- To date effort has been low in Washington tributaries to Bonneville Pool.
- The sport spring chinook fishery in The Dalles and John Day pools has been very slow with no spring chinook landed to date.

FISHERY RECOMMENDATION



Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Tangle Net Demonstration Fishery

- The Joint Staff is recommending to extend the ongoing fishery to allow the commercial fishery access to their Willamette chinook allocation.

<i>Joint Staff Recommendation</i>	
•	The Joint Staff proposes an additional fishing period for the small mesh tangle net demonstration commercial fishery.
Season:	6 PM Tuesday March 26 - 8 AM Wednesday March 27 (14 Hours)
Area:	Zones 1 - 5.
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Gnat Creek, Elokomina-A, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama -A, Lewis-A, Washougal River, and Sandy river sanctuaries.
Gear:	Net not to exceed 150 fathoms in length. 5½ maximum mesh size restriction.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped chinook salmon and sturgeon.
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear that attended a state-sponsored workshop concerning live captive commercial fishing techniques and possess a permit that allows participation in this fishery.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Soak times, defined as time elapsed from when first mesh enters the water to when last mesh leaves the water, must not exceed 45 minutes. Use of recovery boxes will be required on all lethargic or bleeding fish. Each participant will be required to have 2 operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers in place to participate in fishery. Operable recovery boxes will require a flow of 16-20 gallons per minute to the box or each chamber. Each box shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. Lighted buoys required on each end of nets being fished between sunset and sunrise. Quick Reporting Rule remains in effect for Washington buyers.
Catch Expectations:	1,500 - 2,500 marked spring chinook 1,700 - 2,900 unmarked spring chinook 350 - 850 Willamette hatchery spring chinook (4,900 - 5,400 cumulative total) 0.073% - 0.133% upriver impacts (0.542% - 0.602% cumulative total) 1,500 steelhead handled

- Additional fishing period would allow access to surplus Willamette hatchery spring chinook.
- Catch of Willamette hatchery spring chinook is well below the 9,700 fish catch allocation.
- Night fishing minimizes interaction with increasing sport fishery.

- Proposed season is not expected to exceed 9,700 Willamette Hatchery fish limit or the 0.68% upriver wild impact limit.
- Upriver wild impacts remaining after completion of this fishery are expected to total 0.138% -0.078% (1,400-2,500 marked spring chinook).
- No additional fishing periods will be proposed for this time period and remaining impacts will be available for commercial fisheries in late spring or as a buffer for inseason run size updates.

Winter Salmon Season							
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
F		5 AM-7 PM		5 AM-7 PM		5 AM-7 PM	
E							
B	24	25	26	27	28	1	2
M	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
R	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
C	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
H	31						
Adopted Fishing Periods:  Option 1: 							

NEXT COMPACT HEARING

- The Joint Staff recommends no additional Compact hearing be set at this time.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
 March 26, 2002